

CURRENT INTELLIGENCE WEEKLY SUMMARY

1 November 1956

REACTIONS TO POLISH  
AND HUNGARIAN DEVELOPMENTS

Eastern Europe

Poland and Yugoslavia have declared in favor of the demands of the Hungarian insurgents--the Albanian, Bulgarian, Czech and East German regimes having condemned them as counterrevolutionaries. Popular sympathy with the insurgents, coupled with unrest, is reported in order of magnitude in East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, and Albania.

The Polish central committee has publicly proclaimed the legitimacy of the demands of the Hungarian insurgents, insisting that they are neither anti-socialist nor inspired by Western elements. It has also openly urged the removal of Soviet troops from Hungary. Public demonstrations in Poland on behalf of the Hungarian workers came close to violence, and the Polish press has criticized the misleading Czech press treatment of events in Poland.

Officials in Rumania have revealed privately a lack of agreement with the Soviet analysis of the situation in Hungary but in the press have followed the Soviet line. Rumanian leaders who were in Belgrade for talks with the Yugoslavs reportedly departed convinced of the necessity of internal reform and they have already announced a new wage and pension scale.

There are reliable reports that Rumanian public opinion favors the Hungarian workers, and unconfirmed reports of isolated demonstrations.

In Czechoslovakia--where Yugoslavia has sent veteran correspondents in expectation of important developments--there is a hint of disagreement among the top leaders. Publicly, the Czech leaders have been unanimous in castigating the insurgents and have declared that no such developments will be tolerated in Czechoslovakia. The Czech regime is the only Satellite to have publicly condemned the new Hungarian coalition government.

A propaganda barrage condemning the Hungarian developments, frequent public meetings called for the purpose of pledging loyalty to the party, and quick denials of rumored demonstrations, indicate official concern with a restive citizenry, which has expressed widespread sympathy for the Hungarian insurgents. The Czech party reportedly plans to raise wages in deference to worker demands. According to press reports, Czechoslovakia has alerted army units and moved troops to the Hungarian border.

Popular unrest, coupled with widespread sympathy for the Hungarian insurgents, is also evident in East Germany. Party

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leaders have made clear that disorders will not be tolerated.

Albania and Bulgaria have published only limited and derogatory news of Hungary. There have been unconfirmed reports of isolated demonstrations in Albania.

Bulgarian diplomats abroad have reportedly expressed the belief that the Hungarian events prove Stalin's policies were correct.

Yugoslav officials have made both public and private statements of sympathy for the Hungarian rebels. Tito has declared in favor of Hungary's present policies of broad liberalization and democratization and, privately, favors the removal of Soviet troops from the country. A public appeal made by the Yugoslav League of Communists to the Hungarian people on 29 October urged them to halt the bloodshed and to support the new government and party. Although the declaration contained the admission that it constituted an intervention in Hungary's internal affairs, Yugoslavia justified its action on the grounds that the revolt threatens socialism in Eastern Europe.

Tito probably fears that if the fighting continues, the Nagy-Kadar regime will be overthrown by one with Western democratic views, or that Soviet forces will engage in large-scale repression and replace the present government

with one of Stalinist coloring.

Peiping

Communist China has taken no public position--in support of either the USSR on the one hand, or Poland and Hungary on the other--in the evolution of new Soviet-Eastern European relationships. Although Chinese Communist leaders probably sympathize with Polish and Hungarian efforts to achieve a larger degree of independence, Peiping will almost certainly support Soviet efforts to keep Poland and Hungary in the bloc.

Peiping's news reports have minimized the scale of the "excitement" in Poland and the "riots" in Hungary. Chinese dispatches from Warsaw have noted both Polish intentions to work out a new relationship with the USSR and Polish statements about the importance of the "Polish-Soviet alliance." Peiping's only editorial on the subject thus far denounced American and British statements as designed to "aggravate" Soviet-Polish relations, and emphasized Western speculation that changes in bloc relationships will not be "dramatic."

Peiping's broadcasts to the Chinese people have suggested that the eventual relationship it would like to see between the USSR and the European Satellites is approximately the one the Peiping regime itself enjoys. These broadcasts, for example, have noted Polish "concern" over the Khrushchev delegation's visit during the Polish

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party central committee's plenary session and Polish demands for the defense of Poland's "national sovereignty." At the same time, they have reported in detail alleged popular demands that the Polish-Soviet "alliance" be the "foundation" or "fundamental principle" of Polish policies.

Some private remarks by Chinese Communist leaders in September may have been interpreted by Polish and Hungarian leaders as encouraging their views on nationalism. Chou En-lai is reported to have told Polish party leader Ochab at the Chinese party congress that he appreciated the Polish desire for independence and that the Kremlin should not dictate to Poland. The present Hungarian party leader, Janos Kadar, was in Peiping at the same time and might have had a similar conversation. Moreover, Mao Tse-tung is said to have sent Gomulka a telegram of "congratulations" after the latter's appointment as the Polish party's first secretary.

It is questionable, however, whether the Chinese wished to encourage either the Poles or the Hungarians to go as far as they have gone in asserting their independence of Moscow. In this connection, Mao's telegram to Gomulka has not been published in Warsaw, which suggests that Gomulka did not receive an unequivocal statement of support from Mao.

Regardless of developments in Eastern Europe, the Chinese Communists themselves will almost certainly try to avoid moves which would harm their own relationship with Moscow. Despite Chinese sympathy with the Eastern European states,

the Chinese Communist leadership can be expected to continue to act on the principle that--as Liu Shao-chi said in September--the maintenance of the Sino-Soviet alliance is the Chinese party's "supreme international duty."

Asia and the Middle East

The non-Communist press in Asia and the Middle East has welcomed the uprisings in Eastern Europe as a victory for the forces of anticolonialism and independence, and as a forerunner to similar developments in other Satellites. Except for South Korea and Taiwan, both of which called for strong action by the free world, official comment has been guarded.

South Korea's President Rhee expressed the hope that the free world would "launch a great crusade" to overthrow Communist strongholds in Poland, Hungary and other enslaved countries, and called on the United States to oppose any Soviet attempt to suppress the uprisings. Demonstrations, probably officially inspired, have been organized to urge an uprising in North Korea. Seoul radio is broadcasting similar appeals to the North. Chinese Nationalist foreign minister George Yeh announced that his government "stands ready to give support to any movement or action in or outside the United Nations in condemnation of the Soviet violation of the principles of national independence and human rights."

The important Tokyo daily, Asahi, stated that Moscow's attitude will afford an excellent opportunity to judge the USSR's respect for national sovereignty.

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A nationalist paper in Indonesia, which sometimes reflects National Party thinking, interpreted the East European developments as a victory for Tito. It hailed him as a Communist leader who had charted a new way to socialism, permitting every Communist country to develop according to its respective methods and national interest. The same paper claimed demonstration in the revolts of the USSR's oppression of its allies was food for Indonesian thought. Two anti-Communist dailies saw the revolts largely as liberation movements aimed at Soviet colonialism.

Indian prime minister Nehru's public reaction to events in Hungary and Poland has been guarded. Both he and the Indian press, however, seem to interpret them as steps in the "wholesome process of liberalization" and "democratization." Nehru, particularly, seems likely to take these events as proof of his contention that Communist China and other Communist nations are not bound irrevocably to the USSR.

India's largest opposition group, the Praja Socialist Party, has exploited the opportunity to embarrass the Communists by reminding the USSR of its adherence to the "five principles" of peace and coexistence and by deploring its "flagrant intervention" in the internal affairs of Hungary and Poland.

The smaller Southeast Asian nations have given considerable press attention to the events, but have made little editorial or official comment. The Burmese press has expressed strong support for the rebel forces in Hungary, and forcefully condemned Soviet military intervention there.

Only the Communist daily in Indonesia has so far echoed the Soviet line that the revolts resulted from US-financed subversive activity. Japan's Communist Party paper, Akahata, attempted to refute reports that there exists "an insoluble factional struggle in the Polish Communist Party and that the party has a fundamental antagonism against Khrushchev."

The only anti-American comment in the non-Communist press was noted in Yomiuri, Tokyo's third largest daily. It deplored the American move to place the Hungarian issue before the UN. It asserted that the uprising was a domestic issue, adding that the United States was attempting to cover up the "disadvantageous situation brought on by Bulganin's message on nuclear tests."

The Turkish press regards the uprisings as a favorable sign that Moscow's "formidable power has started disintegrating." It recommends all possible help to those revolting against Soviet domination and cautions the West not to "lose the initiative to the USSR in facing up to the Polish developments." Greek comment stresses the theme that the USSR is unable to suppress the forces working for greater freedom in its empire, and most papers add that this situation demonstrates the correctness of the Greek view concerning self-determination for Cyprus.

The attention of Arab officialdom to the uprisings has been diverted by developments in Egypt and Algeria. The Egyptian government-financed press has played down the European developments, and press reaction has been generally mild.

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and hesitant. Anti-Soviet editorial comment appear in the Lebanese and Ethiopian press, with the "Voice of Ethiopia" seeing the events as the beginning of the end of Russian influence in the Satellites and East Germany.

Western Europe

The revolt in Hungary is almost universally regarded in Western Europe as symptomatic of a fundamental, and perhaps enduring, change in the relationship of the Soviet Union with its Eastern European Satellites. Most influential press organs and politicians urge, however, that no hasty or drastic action be taken by the West that might work to cancel the advances toward freedom achieved by the Hungarian rebels.

The British Foreign Office stated on 30 October that it does not believe Nagy can continue to rule in Hungary. British Labor Party leader Gaitskell has publicly expressed the hope that the other Satellites will follow the example of Poland and Hungary.

In West Germany, Chancellor Adenauer has expressed the belief that the uprisings in Hungary and Poland may ultimately promote a more compromising attitude on the part of the Soviet Union toward negotiations on German unification. He pledged that no military action would be taken against Poland to settle differences over the Oder-Neisse boundary. The West

German Socialist opposition has called for diplomatic relations with Poland and Hungary and increased West German trade with the Eastern bloc.

The Austrian cabinet has appealed directly to Moscow to stop its intervention and "restore freedom" in Hungary. Anti-Communist demonstrations have occurred in Rome and other Italian cities to protest against the Soviet forces in Hungary.

The West European Communist reaction to the violence in Hungary reflects the continuing stresses on national party unity in almost every country. The Italian Communist newspaper has abandoned its support of the Soviet line blaming counterrevolutionaries for the violence. On 29 October party leader Togliatti cited Hungary's failure to develop Communism on an adequate national base and to make reforms quickly enough.

In contrast, the French Communists have adopted a rigidly Stalinist public attitude. The American embassy in Paris reports that on 29 October, the French Communist press surpassed itself in defending the Soviet Union and gloating over the "defeat" of the insurgents.

The London Daily Worker continues to equivocate on the issue, both abhorring the "necessity" for Soviet military intervention, and referring to the Hungarian workers' "just demands."

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